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THE WHOLE GLAD YEAR

Samuel Ellsworth Kiser

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By

Samuel Ellsworth Kiser

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January

THE whole year lies
ahead
With all its stored-up
treasures,
With all its praise unsaid
And all its waiting pleasures.

Serene and sacred days
And days with triumph ringing
And fair and flowery ways,
The year is blithely bringing.

Beyond, the whole year lies
With all its precious chances,
And all its rosy skies,
And all its glad romances.

Why should we nurse a fear
Or look ahead with sadness?
Beyond us lies a year
Of glory and of gladness.

February

THE days are growing longer, though the world is white with snow,
And the Spring is drawing nearer, though the winds of Winter blow;
All the sparrows in the hedges twitter "Courage", as I pass;
I can hear the dandelions pushing upward through the grass.

The sun is swinging northward, and the days are lengthening.
The lilac buds are swelling with the joy they are to bring;
Every morning gives a promise, though the winds of Winter blow,
And there's hope in every sunset, though the world is white with snow.

March

WHAT does it matter if winds blow chill,
And the breath of Winter bedims the pane,
If the blossom hides in the brown bud still,
And the bare boughs droop 'neath the pelting rain?
You trust in me and to me you cling,
And in my heart, dear, it is Spring.

Though the fields are brown and the sky is gray,
And the flowers sleep under last year's leaves,
Though the sparrows sit through the sunless day,
All ruffled-up, on the wind-swept eaves,
You laugh, my little one, and you sing,
And in my heart, love, it is Spring.

April

HOW can the day be dreary,
How can the heart be sad;
How can the soul be weary
When all the winds are glad —
When every bud is leaping,
Triumphant, from its bed;
When March is spent and sleeping,
And Summer 's just ahead?

There 's joy among the flowers,
There 's glee upon the hills;
There 's laughter in the showers
That swell the leaping rills;
There 's gladness in the hedges
Where happy songsters wed,
Exchanging loving pledges,
With Summer just ahead.

There 's joy in every cluster
Of reeds upon the slope;
Each morning puts new luster
Upon the shield of hope!
Why should a heart beat sadly,
An eye look out with dread,
When all the woods ring gladly
And Summer 's just ahead!

May

WHAT does the lark in the meadow sing?
"Be glad;"
What is the robin caroling?
"Be glad;"
What are the words that the breezes bring
Over the hills, and what is the thing
That is sung by the rushes beside the spring?
Listen—the song of the breeze and birds
Is a song of joy that has two brave words:
"Be glad."

What do the waves to the pebbles say?
"Be glad;"
What are the words of the thrush's lay?
"Be glad;"
Why is the thorn with its blossoms gay?
Why are the orchards a-bloom today?
Why are the lambs in the fields at play?
God is teaching the world again
To picture His love and to say to men:
"Be glad."

June

A SONG is in the hermit's breast
And glee is in the robin's lay;
The eggs are warm within the nest
That friendly breezes lightly sway.

The stream is singing through the glen
And there is gladness in its tune;
The roses are in bloom again,
The fields proclaim that it is June.

By gentle winds the leaves are stirred
Where honey from the clover drips;
The maiden leans to hear the word
That trembles on her lover's lips.

The orchard shadows slowly shrink,
The glorious year is at its noon;
Oh, if there is a heaven, I think
That there it always will be June.

July

LUSH banks of green, the pleasing scents
That rise from tangled ferns and moss;
The mandrakes in their leafy tents,
The path with green boughs spread across;
The murmur of the pebbly stream,
And all the peaceful day to dream.

The catbird's wail, the bobolink's
Bold challenge from his cool retreat;
The yielding turf which softly sinks
Like splendid carpet 'neath our feet;
A day to dream of by-and-by,
And we in Eden—you and I.

August

THE nest is empty on the bough,
The fledgling ventures forth alone;
Where blossoms lent their sweetness, now
The fruit they promised us is shown.

The grain that waved upon the slopes
Has ripened 'neath the smiling sun
And brought fulfillment of our hopes—
The season's harvesting is done.

O'er all the scene contentment lies,
The earth is richly strewn with sheaves;
The deepest blue is in the skies,
The sweetest rustle in the leaves.

And they alone sit murmuring,
Deprived of hope, to gladness dumb,
Who blindly failed to see in Spring
The harvest time that was to come.

September

OUT beyond us Hope is calling
To the strong and to the fearless;
In the past a mist is falling
On the valleys that were cheerless;
Stretching from the splendid present
There are pathways leading far
To the hilltops where the pleasant
Tints of early Autumn are.

Out beyond us there is lying
A year filled with fair tomorrows;
In the silent past are dying
All our little cast-off sorrows;
In the distance there are glowing
Heights on which proud banners fly;
Armed as victors, we are going
To ascend them, you and I.

October

THERE is a crispness in the air
That makes the timid cease to fear,
That challenges the brave to dare,
And makes the doubter's duty clear;
With well-won gains the vines are rich,
And all the hillsides are ablaze
With gorgeous tints and tinges which
Lend beauty to October days.

Upon the trees where blossoms spread
Their fragrance when the days were long,
The apples' cheeks are turning red;
The lambs have grown sedate and strong;
Clear streams are tinkling blithely where
The fretted banks were full in May;
A sense of peace is everywhere,
And weariness is far away.

Soft robes of royal purple lie
Upon the distant lofty slopes,
And every zephyr passing by
Sings sweetly of rewarded hopes;
The fields are fairer for the loss
Of wealth the granaries have won,
And o'er the far-off town a cross
Is gleaming golden in the sun.

November

THE wind is howling through
the streets,
The walls are shaken by
the storm;
But tucked between the snowy sheets
My little one is safe and warm.

November's wrath is roused to-night;
The storm king's hounds have
slipped their chains
And gallop forth with all their might,
The rain is pelting on the panes;
The ghost of Summer moans outside,
And Aeolus in anger roars;
God help the children who abide
Where Want is crouching at the doors.

The world is lashed as if because
It were some guilty, shameful thing;
The bare limbs bend like giant claws
To rend the sod, and, hammering
Against the walls with all his force,
The storm king tarries for a space,
Then rushes madly on his course
To fret the earth and rend its face.

Ah, let the wind howl through the streets,
Let old November's worst be done,
For tucked between the snowy sheets
All safely lies my little one.

December

HERE with its cares the season ends;
The fires upon the hearth are bright;
Again the star of promise sends
Its message downward through the night.

Peace spreads her mantle o'er the scene,
The tumult ceases for a space;
The world is resting and serene,
And hope transfigures every face.

The lambs are gathered in the fold
Where dangers may not menace them;
At Love's behest once more is told
The story brought from Bethlehem.

The days are brief, the shadows long,
The nights are white and strangely still,
And all the world has one sweet song
Whose sweeter chorus is Good Will.

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